# The Maryland Fruit Grower

February, 1935

Maryland State
Horticultural Society

# The Maryland Fruit Grower

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**Edited by the Secretary, A. F. Vierheller, Extension Horticulturist**

**Vol. 5** **February, 1935** **No. 2**

## *THE LAST ROUND-UP ON PRUNING*

The bad weather has slowed down the work of pruning. We had hoped to forget the pruning write-up for this year, but there are some current articles that seemed worth while to have fruit growers read.

In Virginia "Extension Division News", February, 1935, Mr. A. H. Teske discusses the Virginia pruning situation. Of course, this doesn't apply to Maryland orchards,—or does it? Mr. Teske writes:

"Another pruning season is under way. Present economic and marketing conditions give added importance to this operation because of the effect it has upon cost and returns. Pruning adds considerably to the cost of production. It can make money for the grower, or it can be the cause of heavy losses.

"Apple growers know that consumers do not want and will not pay high prices for scabby or wormy fruit. No matter how many sprays are applied or what materials are used in spraying, if the trees are so tall and thick that the fruit in all parts of the tree cannot be covered properly, insect and disease control measures will not be effective. The right kind of pruning will bring the tall trees down to the proper height and will open the thick and brushy trees to admit spray materials.

"This does not mean opening up great gaps or holes by removing a few large limbs, but it means taking out a larger number of smaller, interfering and parallel limbs, making a large number of small openings through which spray materials and light may penetrate to all parts inside of the tree.

"There are two important reasons for guarding against the cutting or removal of large limbs in the tops of bearing trees. First, in removing large limbs too much strong fruiting wood is destroyed. It has taken a lot of moisture and plant food to produce this strong bearing wood. Why waste it? Furthermore, the removal of a large portion of strong fruiting wood well exposed to the light will reduce the yields of well colored fruit of good size not only for that year, but for several years to come. Second large cuts may expose other scaffold limbs to sunscald, which in time may mean a permanent loss of bearing surface.

"The tops of trees in most Virginia orchards are too thick and brushy. The result is a dwarfing effect upon the lower parts of the tree. A moderate amount of thinning of smaller branches will give lower limbs a better chance to compete for food and moisture, with the result that good growth can be secured throughout the tree. High color, good size, and better quality are now absolutely important in securing markets and satisfactory prices.

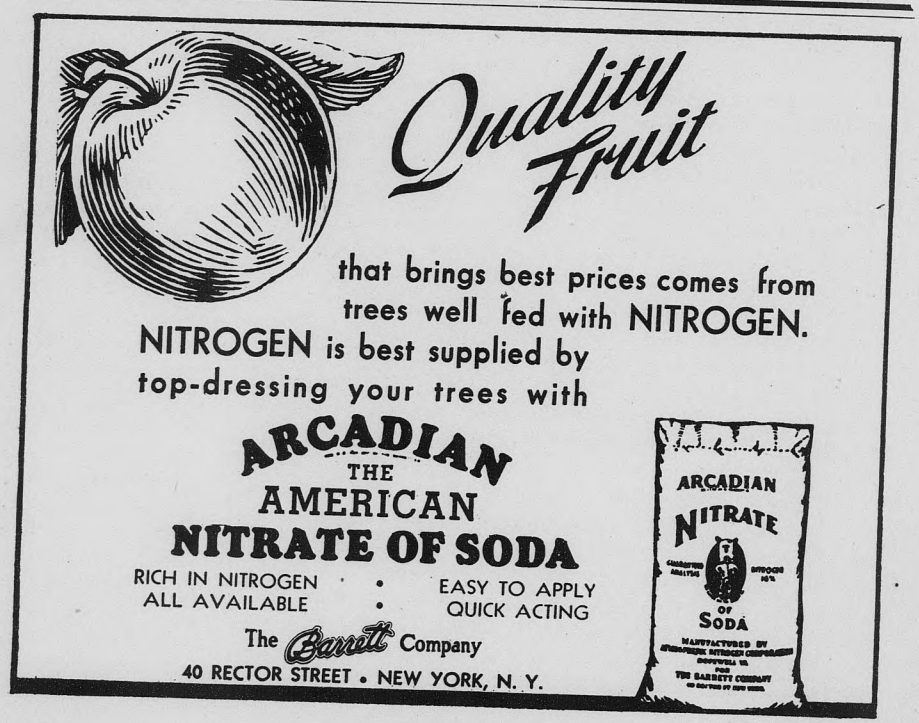
"Pruning done properly may not materially affect the size of the fruit, for soil and fertility are limiting factors. The right kind of pruning, however, can be expected to reduce materially the amount of small and poorly colored fruit that results from over-crowing and weak fruiting wood in many of our commercial orchards.

Every grower will agree that small apples and those with poor color come from the thick, brushy, over-loaded trees, and from the inside and the drooping underside branches of the secondary and main scaffold limbs. By weak

fruit wood is meant, not dead or dying wood, but wood which, because of its position and location, has remained slender and produces small spurs with small, pointed, weak buds, brittle and of dull color. This weak wood not only has fewer leaves but the leaves are smaller and pale in color and, like a piece of worn out machinery, are not capable of manufacturing a supply of food that will produce fruit of good size and color.

"Let us go into the average commercial orchard and examine the type of pruning that has been done and see how it compares with the kind which would result in producing the largest amount of fruit with high color and good size. In other words, has the pruning been such as to preserve the strong fruiting wood? Has the weak worn out wood been removed? Has a condition for maximum production in the future been maintained?

"In the average orchard we are at once struck with the bareness on the upper side of the main scafford limbs. In many cases this has been carried over even to the secondary branches. On the underside we find that few if any of the downward growing branches have been removed. In removing this large number of strong upright-growing branches with only muletails on the ends, the best fruiting wood has been cut away. This type of pruning exposes the tops of the large limbs to sunscald, which in turn affords entrance to blight, perennial canker and other fungous diseases, eventually resulting in breakage and dying of such large limbs and permanently reducing the bearing surface of the tree. The upright-growing wood is always the stronger, more vigorous wood, produces more and larger leaves, is better exposed to sunlight and air, and protects the upper side of the larger limbs against sunscald.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"Removing the top branches and leaving a thick mass of downward-growing branches results in the production of a higher percentage of small and poorly colored fruit. The reason is obvious. Other things being equal, downward and drooping branches, especially as the distance from the outside to the center of the tree is increased, are less vigorous, produce smaller and fewer leaves. The apples borne on such fruiting wood do not receive the necessary amount of light and food, and therefore do not develop high color, good size and quality.

"Go out into your orchard and examine and compare branches growing in an upright position on top of the main limbs with those of the same age growing on the under side and downward. If you have never made such a comparison you will find a surprise awaiting you. What will you see? First, the top branches will have greater diameter, longer terminal growth, strong spurs of good length with good, large buds. Let this be your guide in removing wood in your pruning operations. Cut out as little of the strong, fruiting wood as possible; remove the weak wood and cut under instead of on top. Make your pruning a profitable operation."

Can we prove these statements, or are they just theory?

From "Wisconsin Horticulture", January, 1935, we print the following:

"The so-called 'small wood' pruning of apple trees has a number of distinct advantages according to a talk given by Mr. G. L. Ricks of the Horticulture Department, Michigan State College at the annual convention of the Michigan State Horticultural Society. In experiments carried on to determine the value of taking out the small and unproductive wood as compared to the vigorous and productive type of wood, Mr. Ricks stated that on unpruned Jonathan trees there were 21% of small apples, 2¼ inch in diameter and less, but in the 'small wood' pruned trees there was only 7% of small apples. These trees were 15 to 35 years old.

"Unpruned McIntosh trees, 17 years old( produced 56% small apples, while those from which the unproductive wood had been pruned, only 13% of small apples were found. These were on a sandy soil.

"McIntosh on a sandy loam soil, 27 year old trees, produced 52% small apples on unpruned trees, and only 14% small apples on the pruned trees.

"The color of both McIntosh and Jonathan apples was improved when the small unproductive wood was taken out. Unpruned Jonathans has 22% poorly colored apples, but pruned trees had only 11%.

"The tests also indicated that there was no decrease in yield due to this type of pruning. Mr. Ricks stated that often times in regular pruning, yields are cut from 15 to 30% due to poor pruning methods. Many orchards would be better unpruned than with the kind of pruning they are getting.

"Comparing the 'small unproductive wood' pruning with light regular pruning, it was found that there were twice as many small apples on trees given the regular pruning than on the other type.

"There were 19% of green apples on the "unproductive wood" pruned trees, and 32% green apples on those given light regular pruning. The yield of the small wood pruned trees was 25 bushels per tree while the regularly pruned trees produced 21 bushels per tree.

"In addition, taking out small wood was a help in better spraying. It was found in certain orchards 1 out of 5 codling moths entered the apples from the outside of the tree, while 4 out of 5 entered from the inside of the tree. Opening up the tree by taking out small wood enabled the sprayer to cover the apples on all sides."

# WAXY, SMOOTH FINISH... HIGH COLOR

# More

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The original Dry Lime Sulfur U. S. Patent No 1,264,908, Jan. 29, 1918. Reissue patent No. 14,980, June 22, 1920.

It's the high sulfur deposit secured by the combined use of Sherwin-Williams Dry Lime Sulfur and Mulsoid Sulfur that will enable you to grow apples free from scab and russet and to maintain healthy, vigorous foliage on your trees next season.

Experiments conducted by our own research department and the experience of many successful orchardists are combined in our recommended spraying schedule, which will produce a heavier deposit of non-injurious sulfur residue which will control scab on your apples and foliage—and this does NOT mean the use of caustic liquid lime sulfur. Liquid Lime Sulfur at any practical dilution will russet your apples and "brown" the foliage, when used either alone or combined with a wettable sulfur.

For the cluster-bud or pink spray, use 3 pounds of Sherwin-Williams Dry Lime Sulfur to 50 gallons of water in the calyx spray. Those applied one week, ten days and two weeks after the calyx spray should use 1 pound of Sherwin-Williams Dry Lime Sulfur plus 2 pounds of Mulsoid Sulfur and 2 pounds of Hydrated Lime to 50 gallons of water. In the application 4 weeks after the calyx spray use 2 pounds of Mulsoid Sulfur with 2 pounds of Hydrated Lime to 50 gallons of water. In this combination of Dry Lime Sulfur and Mulsoid Sulfur, you will get a high deposit of non-caustic, adhesive, scab-controlling sulfur residue.

Sherwin-Williams Dry Lime Sulfur is stabilized, 33° Baume liquid lime sulfur of the purest composition. It is the Original Dry Lime Sulfur, made according to a patented process.

Mulsoid-Sulfur is a wettable sulfur containing not less than 98% of sulfur having a minimum of 300 mesh plus an adhesive wetting agent.

Make your apple spraying program for 1935 a safe and sure one—keep away from injurious liquid lime sulfur that causes russeting of apples and foliage injury. Follow the schedule we have recommended and spray thoroughly with the dependable Sherwin-Williams Dry Lime Sulfur-Mulsoid Sulfur combination.

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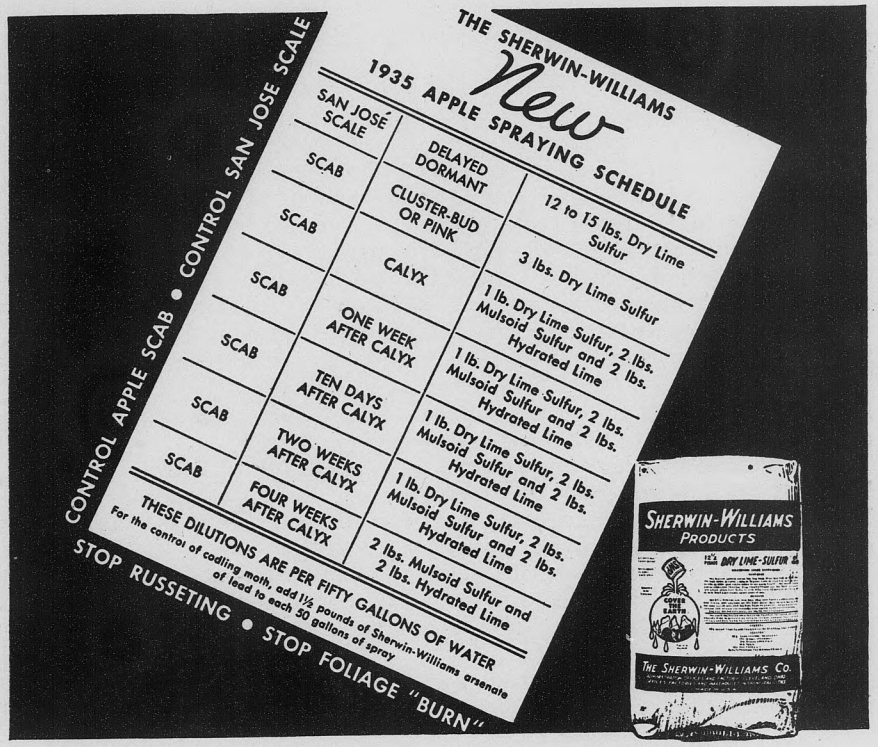
UNINJURED FOLIAGE . . . . . .

**A-*Grade Apples*** WHEN YOU FOLLOW

APPLE SPRAYING SCHEDULE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3 lbs. Dry Lime Sulfur
CALYX
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ONE WEEK AFTER CALYX
1 lb. Dry Lime Sulfur, 2 lbs. Mulsoid Sulfur and 2 lbs. Hydrated Lime
TEN DAYS AFTER CALYX
1 lb. Dry Lime Sulfur, 2 lbs. Mulsoid Sulfur and 2 lbs. Hydrated Lime
TWO WEEKS AFTER CALYX
1 lb. Dry Lime Sulfur, 2 lbs. Mulsoid Sulfur and 2 lbs. Hydrated Lime
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THESE DILUTIONS ARE PER FIFTY GALLONS OF WATER
For the control of codling moth, add 1½ pounds of Sherwin-Williams arsenate of lead to each 50 gallons of spray
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Now let's look at some Maryland figures.

In 1924, A. L. Schrader and A. F. Vierheller began some pruning and grading work and even though the figures are not recent, the results are interesting. The report on this work was made in 1926:

"The Long orchard at Carrollton contained a block of York Imperial trees, 18 years old. The trees had always received a light pruning annually, and the branches had gradually become quite numerous. The trees were medium in vigor as evidenced by quite short terminal growths. The orchard was growing in sod on a fairly steep hillside. The soil consisted of a moderately heavy clay loam. The production of fruit was fairly good, as the trees had received a light dressing of barnyard manure each year, the grass and weeds being cut before picking time, and left as a mulch. Blemishes and poor color, in addition to only fair yields, were the chief faults, and scab was serious. Believing that amount and size of fruit could be improved by pruning these old trees heavier, and that better color and quality would result by greater exposure to sunlight and the possibility of better spraying, three uniform rows of 11 trees each were selected in the spring of 1924, one row to receive heavy pruning, one moderate pruning, and one light pruning.

"Heavy pruning during 1924, 1925 and 1926, consisted of the removal of all crossing, interfering, or crowded branches. Some limbs of three to four inches in diameter were removed. The smaller wood was thoroughly thinned out and small weak spur-bearing branches removed. The tops of the trees were lowered from two to four feet by cutting back the centers of the main limbs to strong outward growing branches. The trees were well thinned out, but the tops were not opened to danger of sunscald.

"Moderate pruning was about half as severe as the heavy pruning, less large cuts, and fewer small ones being made. Only an occasional limb was headed back. Light pruning consisted of removing only the suckers and some of the worst crossing branches.

"Cultural practices were also changed at the beginning of the demonstration. The orchard received a thorough disking early each spring, and five pounds of nitrate of soda per tree were applied at the time. No thinning of fruit was done.

"Yield records were obtained, and the fruit was followed over the packing table into the barrel. The yields follow:

TABLE I—*Average Yields Per Tree in Bushels*

| | *Heavy Pruning* | *Moderate Pruning* | *Light Pruning* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1924 | 3.67 | 3.05 | 1.07 |
| 1925 | 3.77 | 3.82 | 5.4 |
| 1926 | 15.63 | 15.59 | 14.54 |
| Aver. yield for 3 yrs. | 7.69 | 7.48 | 7.00 |

Barrelled fruit grading U. S. No. 1 showed as follows:

TABLE II—*Percentages of Fruit in Different Grades—1924*

| | *Below 2¼ in.* | *2¼—2½ in.* | *2½—3 in.* | *3 in. up* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Heavy pruning | 4.5 | 24.5 | 53.0 | 18.0 |
| Moderate pruning | 2.0 | 22.0 | 56.0 | 20.0 |
| Light pruning | 10.0 | 33.0 | 42.0 | 15.0 |

TABLE III—*Percentage of Fruit in Different Grades—1925*

| | *Below 2¼ in.* | *2¼—2¾ in.* | *Above 2¾ in.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Heavy pruning | 0.8 | 30.2 | 69.0 |
| Moderate pruning | 0.8 | 31.0 | 68.2 |
| Light pruning | 1.0 | 42.0 | 57.0 |

"The fruit was not graded and barrelled in 1926 owing to congestion in the packing shed, but general observation showed that the fruit on both the heavily and moderately pruned trees was larger and had better color.

"Several limbs broke down in this orchard in 1926 due to the heavy crop, but there was less of this injury on the heavily pruned row. Although the lightly pruned row produced a large amount of fruit in 1926, it was of poor color, and blemished considerably. Due to unusual rains, the fruit size was better than usual on all trees in 1926.

"Although the cultivation and nitrate of soda no doubt improved the yield and growth of all trees, including the lightly pruned trees, still better results have been secured where the trees received either heavy or moderate pruning. There has been a larger total amount of good sized and good colored fruit produced. The trees are in a much better state of vigor and indications are for better crops in the future. In this demonstration, heavy pruning produced only slightly better results than moderate pruning. It is clearly shown that as bearing trees become older they respond to moderately heavy pruning better than to light pruning.

"Terminal growth for the three-year period averaged 7.1 inches on the hard pruned trees, 5.8 inches on the moderately pruned trees and 4.0 inches on the lightly pruned trees."

## *FIRE BLIGHT AND BEES*

About a year ago, N. R. Rosen, of Arkansas reported that cultures taken from honey and comb, brood cells and pollen cells throughout summer, winter and even in the spring, before fire-blight appeared on trees, showed that fire blight organisms survived in bee hives, and could be carried over by bees. Naturally, such news caused comment from growers and bee-keepers.

Fire blight is a bacterial disease. Its development depends upon weather conditions during the following the blossom period. It is spread by insects, splashing rains and even by birds. It does not develop every year. Bees are no doubt the cause of some of its spread. It has appeared rather seriously, this year in Maryland orchards, on Jonathan, Stayman and York. There seems to be no control except to cut it out during summer, while it can be seen. Very often black rot follows on the blighted limbs.

Nobody came forward to plead the case of the bee, accused of harboring blight in the bee hive, although a statement was made that bacteria could not survive on a medium like honey.

In the 1934 Proceedings of the Ohio State Horticultural Society, Dr. A. L. Pierstorff, Extension Pathologist of Ohio State University reports some interesting experiments with bees and fire blight, using various commercial orchards for the tests.

Briefly, the results seemed to show that it is very difficult to get much infection on blossoms even where the hives were heavily inoculated with fire blight. Fire blight organisms were found on bees only 2 days after the hive was inoculated. The organism lived for 5 to 11 days on honey in the laboratory. The organism could not be found in the hives, one day after inocula-

tion. It appears, then, that growers and bee-keepers have little need to worry about bees keeping fire blight around the hive, to carry to the blossoms. They will carry blight from blossom to blossom, but so will any other insect that happens to get some of the infection on its feet from a blighted blossom, or an oozing canker. We must have the bees in order to have fruit, even if blight is a part of the price to pay.

---

## *ANOTHER CHANGE*

It seems that the public got the idea that sulfur fumes as used in holding the color of dried apples, apricots and peaches was a poisonous process, and there has been some decline in the use of these dried fruits. According to the August, 1934, American Fruit Grower Magazine, the U. S. Department of Agriculture has developed a process of spraying the freshly cut fruit sections with pineapple juice, thus preserving the color and even improving the palatability of the dried fruit.

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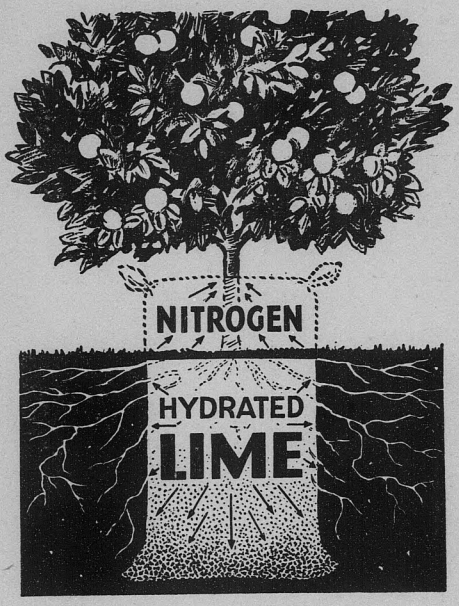


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**22% NITROGEN**
**70% HYDRATED LIME**

*The Fruit Fertilizer*

## It FEEDS the Tree and LIMES the Soil

**'AERO' CYANAMID**

**A non-leaching form of nitrogen**
May be applied in fall, winter (in Southern States), or early spring, as one prefers

**Feeds the tree throughout growing season**
Produces dark green leaves and holds them on until fall (On sandy and shaly soils the supplemental use of potash is recommended)

**Keeps the soil sweet and healthy**
Destroys acids resulting from use of sprays and cover crops

**Produces good terminal growth and fruit buds**
Gives bigger yields of better-quality fruit

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*Write for Leaflet X-307, "Fertilizing Fruit with Granular 'Aero' Cyanamid"*

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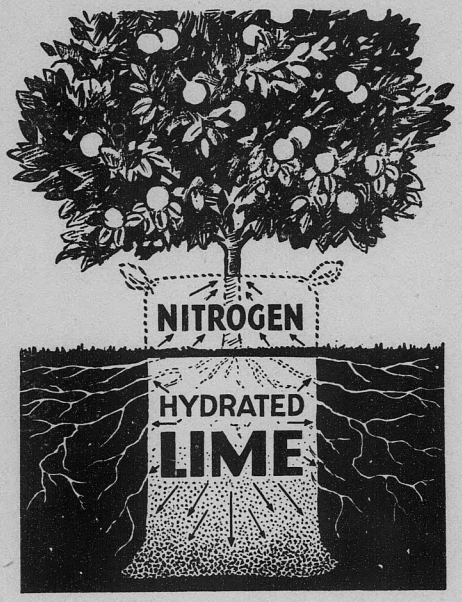


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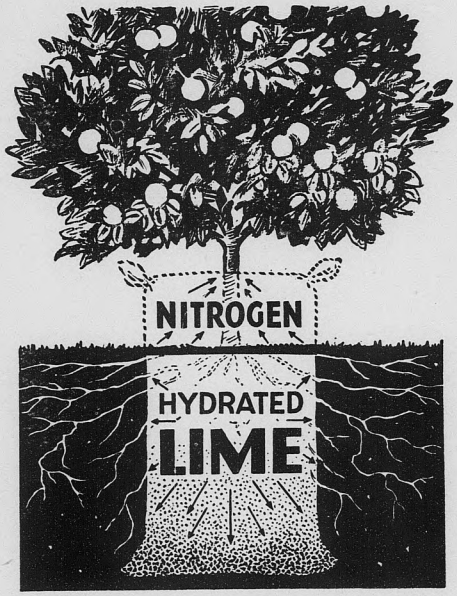


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# COLD WINTER?

**YOU MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE HAD AS COLD A WINTER AS LAST YEAR, BUT IN ANY EVENT**

***YOU CAN REST ASSURED***

**—THAT—**

## SCALECIDE or PRATT'S TAR OIL SPRAYS

**MAY BE USED WITH**

## SAFETY AND GREAT BENEFIT

In 1934 trees sprayed with Pratt's tar oil sprays showed remarkable recovery from winter injury, proving that Pratt's tar oils are safe in spite of sub-zero weather.

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It is a notable fact that trees sprayed with Scalecide did not suffer the same amount of winter injury last season as trees of the same variety in adjoining rows sprayed with lime sulfur or oil emulsion, showing increased vigor of the trees.

Scalecide kills a large percentage of the over wintering codling moth larvae on your trees; from five to fifteen times as many as other oil sprays used at the same time. This reduces the codling moth population and makes it easier to control. We know of no orchard where Scalecide is used regularly that has a serious codling moth problem.

This is in addition to cleaning up Scale, Aphis, Red Mite, etc., and invigorating your trees.

# B. G. PRATT CO.

Dept. "F"

50 Church Street New York